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#14

Dr. James.

Peritonitis

Enteritis

Diarrhea

Erysipelas

Hematuria

On Erysipelas, Hysteritis

by Hardin Mays

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A

Dissertation

on

Erysipelas

Preliminary Remarks

The Skin, which has been denominated the parietes of the human body, considered physiologically, answers a twofold purpose in the animal economy: It is the organ of touch, it covers and protects the whole structure; it is the outlet for a large proportion of the insensible perspiration, and it performs absorption. So extremely sensible is this part, such are its exposures to the attack of noxious agents, and so invariable are its sympathies with the whole body, and the various component organs, that we shall not be surprised, to find it often the seat of morbid affections. It is not infrequently, the part first attacked by those noxious agents or causes, which either directly or indirectly, assail the life or health of man. So various are these causes of cutaneous diseases in their mode of operation; so intermingled and obscure are they in the effects which they produce, and such is the near resemblance very often of these effects, that no small degree of difficulty and perplexity is presented, in attempting to distinguish them. Avicenna, which has done so much in explaining many other morbid affections, has not been so successful in elucidating those of the skin; hence, as has been observed, the treatment of them is often empirical and prejudicial. Parts of an identity of structure are generally

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affected by diseases very similar in appearance, but we are not from
the circumstances, too hastily to conclude that they are the same, &
and to some more particularly will this remark apply, than those just
mentioned. They are mostly eruptions of various kinds, possessing
some characteristics in common, but differing in many others. These
are unimplicated in small pox, measles &c each seems to possess a peculiar
specific action producing effects sui generis. — On what this specific
action depends I am unable to say; it is apparently a secretion of a
particular kind which takes place according to some law of the animal
economy, not yet explained. Without, however, our being able to com-
prehend this subject, by attending carefully to the history of the various
phenomena which occur in cutaneous diseases, we shall be enabled to
treat them, in many cases successfully. Two circumstances seem
constantly to influence them, and ought always to be kept in view
viz, the structure of the part affected, and the nature of the morbid
agent producing that effect.

Having premised these remarks, I proceed to the consideration
of the subject, which is more particularly, the object of this essay.

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Erysipelas.

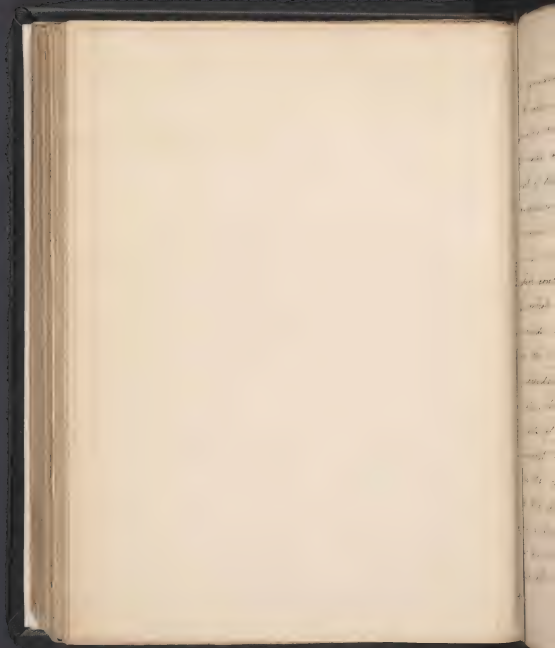
According to a late writer, this may be defined "An inflammatory, cutaneous, and locally elevated swelling, attended with indurage, which disappears and leaves a white spot for a short time after being touched with the end of the finger; and the affection is characterized by a remarkable propensity, to spread with rapidity to a large extent." Although this disease has been generally considered an inflammatory affection, and it undoubtedly is so, in a very general acceptance of the term inflammation, yet on examining its symptoms more accurately we shall find it very different from phlegmon; the pain, the secretion, the whole of the phenomena are in fact totally dissimilar. In erysipelas genuine pus is never secreted, adhesive inflammation does not circumscribe the disease as in common phlegmon, but matter once extravasated, travels sometimes to a great extent through the cellular substance, causing gangrene and necrification.

As erysipelas never appears in any other part but the skin we have a right to conclude, that this membrane alone is its seat; whether in the rete mucosum, as some have supposed, or the cutis vera, as stated by others, is not absolutely known.

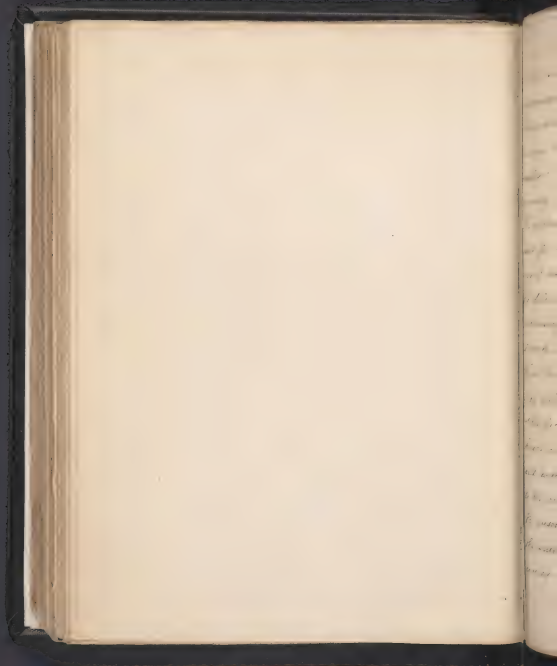
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It gradually descends from the front it first descends
 to the other parts of the face, commonly till it reaches
 the throat, and then it descends on the neck, or descends on some
 part of the neck. As the redness spreads it commonly
 disappears, or at least decreases in the parts, it has not
 reached. The parts on which the redness appears
 are at the same time affected with some swelling,
 which continues for some time, after the redness has left
 the whole face becomes considerably livid, and the
 solids are often so much excited, as entirely to shut
 up the eyes. When the redness and swelling have
 proceeded for some time, there commonly arise sores or
 vesicles of a larger or smaller size, on several
 parts of the face. These contain a thin yellowish or
 almost colourless fluid, which is sooner, or later, absorbed
 in the texture of the vesicles. The surface of the skin
 in the blistered places, sometimes becomes very hot,
 but this heat seldom goes deeper than it appears,
 it discovers any degree of gangrene affecting the skin.
 In the parts of the face not affected with blisters, the

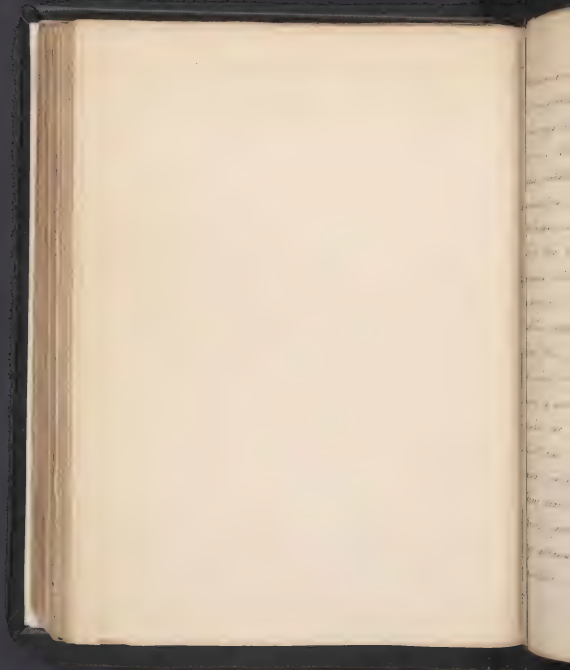


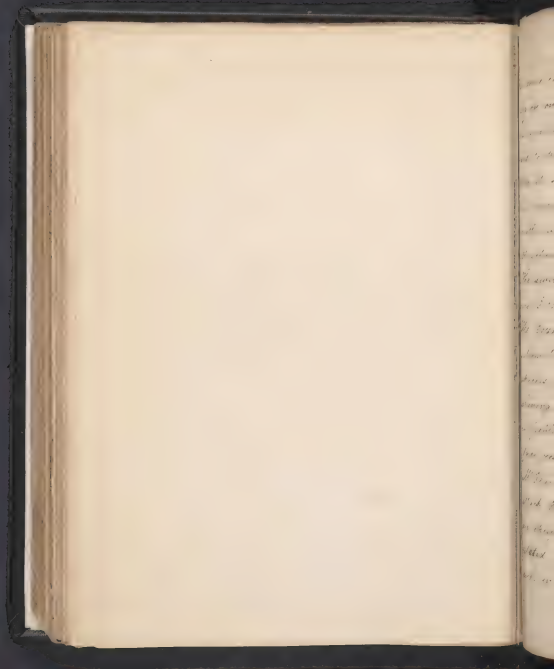
the public mind, and the general sentiment
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In some cases, the one case has been observed after swelling
up on one leg, to affect the other pretty much in the
same manner, and in some cases it has been sup-
posed to be transmitted to the bones, as it is at present.
When it affects the extremities, sometimes the swelling
is more general than the joint itself. In these cases
it is a very generally admitted, in the collection
it contains.

The swelling of the glands, which is seldom observed
in I conceive to be a significant affection.

The contagious character affects the face & neck, in
some cases. It has not as yet been seen in the
throat and is not fatal: the swelling has a smooth
shining surface, and is of a pale color, the swelling
is painful and there is some difficulty in eating. The
face resembles a bladder distended with water.

Dr. Ferrius observes that, three years of the disease were
marked by some of very great & long duration, but these
are chiefly affected by the same constitution, are doubt-
lessly by age or climate. It is also frequent the most
rare in England, Germany, in children and in new born

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Infants. — The *Netem* *Exanthema* of Infants
most commonly, is stated, with light or reddish
latter back in the mouth the
with a redness of face, nausea and sometimes vertigo
are very common. The patient being singular, has
labeled, constant pains, and a sharp sensation
of heat, without however, having a great amount
of the skin or moist throat. The temperature is
not much frequently noticeable. The skin
has a rose color becoming often a yellow, the pain
is of a sensitive burning kind. It may continue
with or without fever. This is considered an
constitutive property of the constitution of the animal.
The *Exanthema* affecting Infants at an early period
after birth, was first described by Dr. Andrieux
under the name of anomalous inflammation of Infants.

The *Time* or *Thyridia* has been considered by
many writers as a species of *Myxoma*.
Besides these which are the more regular forms of
exanthema, it frequently occurs in patches, on vari-
ous parts of the body, attended by heat, or no fever.

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If any form of the disease be purely local, it must be this: Under this might be included that arising from wounds.

Most authors mention the gangrenous state of erysipelas as another species. It seems to be attended by that state of fibrile action denominated by the old writers pectus, or what may now be Tophus loquax.

The parts exhibit the usual signs of sanguine and morbid action, are frequently swollen, resembling but less are discharged: but the suppuration & coexistence, may take place without so malignant a state of fever. The serious effusions of matter which often take place in the common acute form of the disease, in the cellular structures, may cause them.

Among the many causes which have been suggested for erysipelas, none seem now distinct or satisfactory. The most ancient opinion is that of Hippocrates and Galen, who supposed it depended upon a congestion of the milk.

Modern authors enumerate the following,

1st Direct Cause. — 1. Exposure to the heat of the

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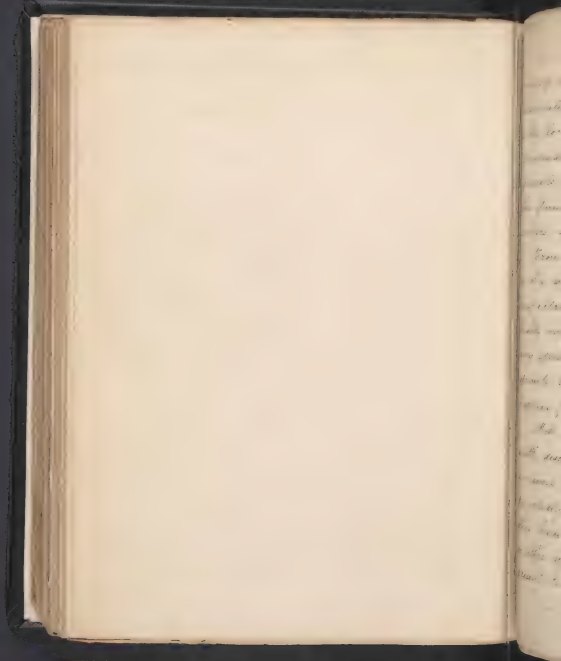
sun, or that of fire too long continued. — 6th The
impression of cold damp air, — 7th The action of various
vegetable, animal, or mineral poisons. 8th Burns
contusions, fractures &c. 9th Salt flat 10th Effluvia
vacuations. — 11th Disorder of the primæ viæ.

There can be no doubt that erysipelas has sometimes
prevailed as an epidemic: Dr. Parr says he has
seen it four times; and Mr. Pearson observes that
there is some reason to conclude that it is occasi-
onally so. —

Is erysipelas contagious? The best authorities
on this subject seem not to decide positively,
whether it is, or is not so. It certainly is of
some importance to decide this question correctly,
without however taking this upon myself, I may
be permitted to remark, that it does not follow
the laws of those diseases, which are known to
acknowledge but one cause, to be strictly contagious.
This semivital disease the susceptibility to a second
attack, whenever it is increased by this.
Will its becoming Zophus render it contagious?

[illegible]

ought it not to breathe suspicion from them, and
not erysipelas? There can be no doubt of its
occurring frequently when there is no probable chance
of contagion. What then is the prevailing nature
of this disease? Local inflammation of every
kind is a new element there from the fever
which attends it; and while we admit many dis-
tinctions of the former, the same will not hold
good of the latter. At the same time we must
allow, that the fever is often much influenced
by the local disease. — From all that has been
said, one may infer, that the gland's affection
may be either, inflammatory, lymphus, or of a
mixed character, that it may, and often does
change from one to the other. These may now
be influenced by various circumstances, such as
the type of the prevailing epidemic; it may
be decided by disposition that takes a deep
this compelled every disease to wear its livery.
For the constitution and habits of the person, those
who support life, or rather force it, almost

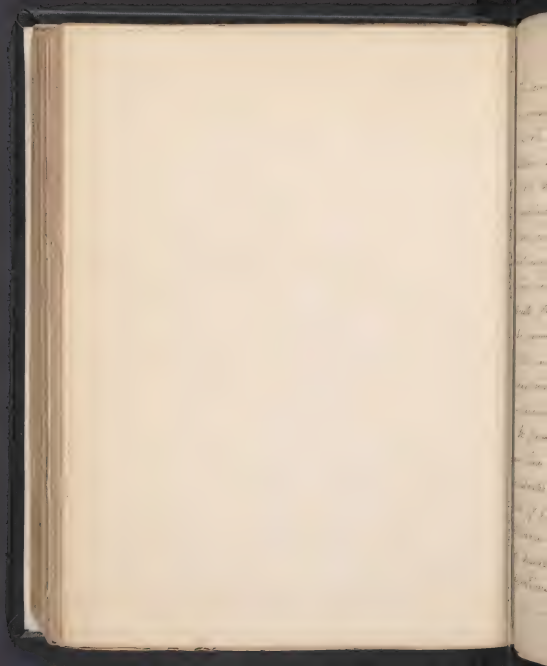


... on the subject. This also, and of course you
should also take into account ~~some~~ of the
the local situation. The same is at least
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From every view that I have been able to take
of the disease, and from the experience of the most
reliable authorities, I conclude, that it is of a
highly inflammable character, disposed to run
very often, if not always, in a short time into an
effluvia extreme, and that the greatest mischief
arises from an excess of action.

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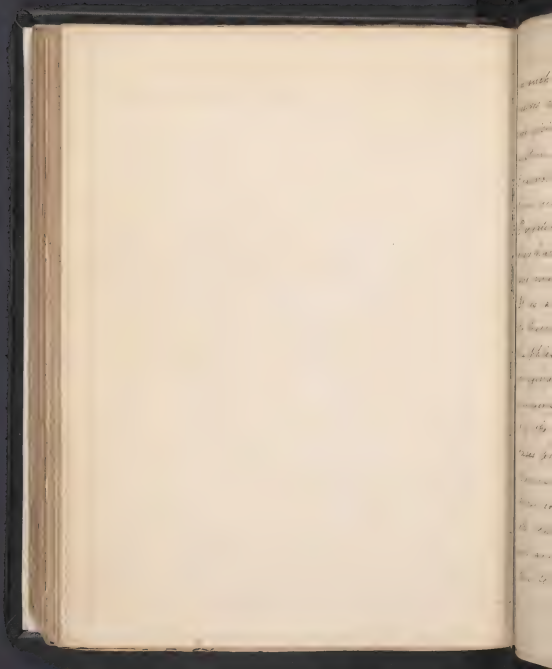


The curative means are generally divided into the general
 & the local.

As the most powerful means of reducing arterial action, and thereby morbidities, or overcoming the violence of the disease, bloodletting may be placed first.

Employed indiscriminately, as Colas and some others
are recommended, it could not fail, in many cases,
not only to be useful, but highly beneficial, but
it is not to be used as a general remedy, and in the
early form of the disease, it is an inefficient remedy
in some of the cases, in which it is used, and in
the most severe cases, it is not recommended, and in
the most severe cases, it is not recommended, and in
the most severe cases, it is not recommended.

In some of "letters," there is not an unimportant
one has become amongst several others. But he, the
"Letter" part is a collection, and is really considered
one of the most important and interesting books
of the time. It has been described by "The" and
the "Review" of the "Review," by "The" and "The"
"Review," from which we may conclude that



in such cases, suchies would have been indicated
besides evacuating the Stomach thus forming a complete
empyem. though its success is no less certain
when, and sometimes also in the others: in those cases
however, a more and more of blood is used from
time to time.

Prognosis have been highly varied by some, who
have been as much affected by others. Even
the meaning of the term has been variously understood.
It is allowed by every one to be fatal in all cases
to reach the Cancer in a tolerable state, and in
the phlegmonous erysipelas, of the face and head, when
the gangrene may be placed next to mortification, but as
the gangrene extends with another important invasion
the determination to it, perhaps, it in many
cases becomes a questionable remedy.

Various accidents have been communicated, but
have been proved to be of the present time, and
the antiseptic. DePauw's practice was to give
an ounce of the imbricated, largely diluted, and
then to be repeated if necessary.



In every case, the body must be kept at a moderate temperature, such as will be most agreeable to the patient's feelings. In the Erysipelas and gangrenous erysipelas, we evacuate life and resort earliest to stimulants.

The local means have been, even more numerous than the general; various ointments, cataplasms, washes &c have been recommended, but have all been found inefficacious or prejudicial. It is fully worn & Bullen persuaded of this, that he discards them all, except a little flour sprinkled on the part, in order to absorb the fluid discharged from the vesicles. Since his time however, a very important improvement, has taken place in the treatment of this disease. I allude to the use of blisters, and a solution of opium. Blisters were used so long ago as the time of Ambrose Paré: they were then directed to be applied to the neighbouring parts. A very different practice is now followed; we apply them directly to the diseased part. They excite a new action in the part, and according to that law of the animal economy, so ably developed by M. Hunter, the incompatibility of two actions of

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equal force in the same part, at the same time, overcome the disease, and allow the part to resume its healthy action. To Dr. Physick we are indebted for the introduction of this excellent practice, in the treatment of erysipelas, bases which formerly spread with dreadful devastation, can now be checked with as much promptness, and certainty, as any other disease.

As it would not be so proper to apply blisters to the face, it is in this case that we resort to the solution of opium, with great advantage.

In the erysipelas which so often attends wounds and bruises, blisters are eminently serviceable; they should be applied all over the diseased part.

When collections of matter form, free incisions should be made, and not small openings as some have advised, in order to evacuate the matter, with the sloughs

